



Preface

The goal of this special issue is to provide an authoritative, current guide to disease prevention and health promotion. The contributors are distinguished experts in public health, epidemiology and clinical medicine.

The first group of papers deals with background issues. Dr Mason and Mr Tolsma outline the significance of personal health maintenance from the perspective of the federal government. Dr Breslow emphasizes the importance of patient involvement in a "health-oriented medical service." Problems that clinicians may encounter when using screening tests are discussed by Dr Friedman. Dr Collen presents an economic analysis of periodic health examinations. Sociocultural influences affecting personal health decisions are discussed by Dr Ulmer. Dr Williams stresses the importance of the family history in identifying persons predisposed to selected major diseases.

The second group of papers details specific recommendations on personal health maintenance for pregnant women, children, adults and the geriatric population. Drs Clever and Arsham provide advice on how physicians should maintain their own health.

The third group of papers focuses on health promotion. Dr Brunton discusses the role of physicians in teaching and assisting patients to change unhealthy life-styles. Dr Greenblatt summarizes the factors that contribute to good mental health. Life-style issues are presented in the papers on exercise, diet, smoking, alcohol and drug use.

The contributors hope this special issue will be useful. They also express their appreciation for the editorial assistance of M. S. M. Watts, MD; L. H. Smith, Jr, MD, and the staff of *The Western Journal of Medicine*.

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Special Issue Editor